

Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



Fused Magnesia & Fused Silica
for the World

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Reduced Scrap Saves Landfill and Money

The Member

Minco, Inc. has manufactured fused silica and fused magnesia in Midway, Tennessee since 1977. Minco's 140 employees electrically fuse, grind, qualify, and package Minco's grain and flour mineral products that are shipped worldwide. Minco's products are used in the investment casting, refractory, heating element, and friction material industries.

Minco values a healthy and safe environment for its employees to work in and the community to live in. As such, Minco ensures health, safety, and environmental issues remain the number one priority for the company. Minco ensures this by: compliance, prevention, communication, and continual improvement.

The Story

In 2001 Minco's Fused Silica Plant operated with a scrap rate of 36% based on amounts of finished pounds produced versus the amount of raw material pounds received. Scrap was costing Minco over \$112,000 per year.

Minco's management team set an aggressive goal to reduce scrap at its silica plant to below 25%. To achieve the goal, in January 2002 Minco formed 2 scrap teams, a fusion department team and a grinding department team.

Each team was to focus primarily on sources of scrap within their individual departments but was encouraged to think outside the box.

The Success

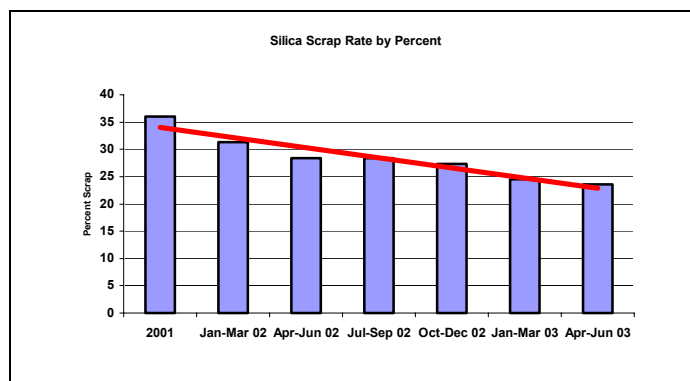
The teams identified and analyzed possible sources, assigned priorities, and corrective action plans were developed and implemented.

Primary sources of scrap identified were leaking elevators and conveyors.

A major outcome of the project was increased employee awareness of the problem and how much it was costing the company.

Through the implementation of the scrap teams' ideas, Minco's monthly scrap rate was reduced to an annual rate of less than 29% in 2002, less than 23% year to date in 2003, and resulted in a net increase of nearly \$50,000 operating income in 2002.

Minco continues to attack its scrap problem and is researching possible outlets for its scrap with a long-term goal to reduce scrap to as little as 10%.



The Pollution Prevented

Minco's scrap rate reduction project prevented approximately 1,000,000 pounds of fused silica solid waste from going into the local Greene County landfill in 2002.

1 July 2003